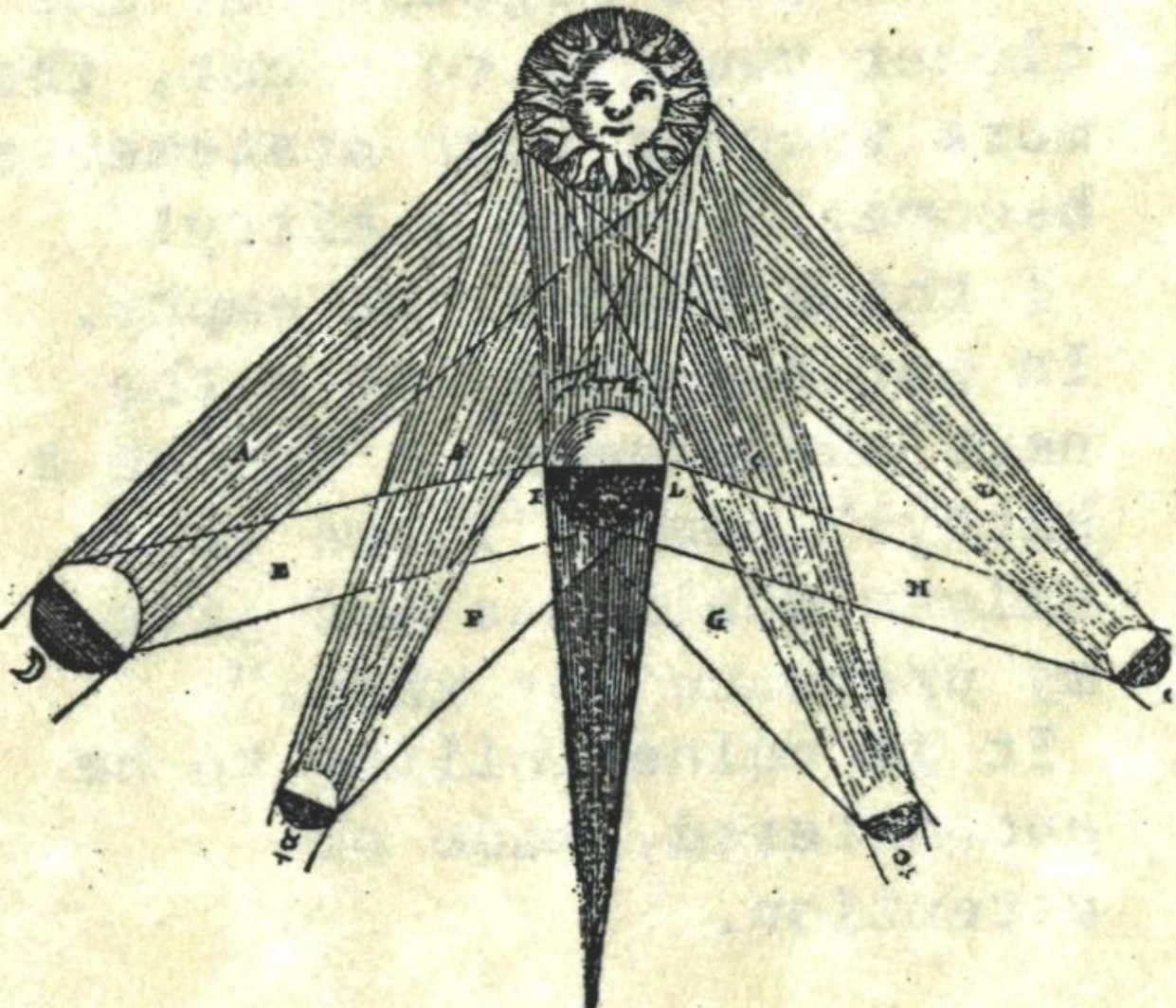
The Autistic Mistake

What Communication Is Not And What Language Is For to Neurotypicals

LfP #82



1. The Autistic Presumption

I love language. I used to have a crush on it, which is different. A crush is hope. Then, disillusion.

The autistic presumption is that language is used to communicate information.

The autist will walk around every day, imagining that people are interested in ideas and want to share knowledge about them to accomplish their goals. This belief is mistaken. It can harm or even destroy.

2. The Allistic Action

Most speech is **speech act** and **social act.**
It does something.
It does socializing.
It makes and reinforces social structure.
It enforces hierarchy.
It prevents change and punishes difference.
This is unfair and bad.

That's my 101, but let's go beyond intro today. Somewhere perhaps less pessimistic and more fundamental.
We'll touch fiction, comic, cartoon. We'll invent the **Larson-Munroe** hypothesis. But first, Sturgeon.

3. Sturgeon's Net

The allist talks nonsense. Every day, he walks around repeating received inanities. There are two kinds.
The loud ones are vague, deniable threats of real violence. The softer ones are a sparse and continued beeping to indicate safety. Comfort. Status good, no surprises, just stock phrases.

This nearly information-free communicative field I call **crap**, following **Sturgeon's Law**, which I take seriously and expand into a general information theory: "90 percent of information is not."

4. What They're Really Saying

While comfort is beeping, when sociability feels stable, speech is a little freer. It can do more. It can begin to attempt more sophisticated messages, like:

"Hey!"

Dog Translator is a work in one panel by legendary cartoonist Gary Larson. A scientist invents a canine decoder that pierces another species' reality to find dogs crying in varied unison: "Hey!" I think an **allistic decoder** might give the same result.

5. You're a Kitty

"Hey!" means "Look at me," and I am not calling that frivolous. I'm saying **attention is fundamental.** In "Hey!" and in the next step, too. Here I refer to **xkcd** comic **231 Cat Proximity.** Munroe here argues that the closer you get to a cat, the more vacuous your statements become: "You're a kitty!"

I think that's not empty. In our sequence, it's the next advancement. "You're a kitty!" means "I see your unique qualities and give my presence for them."

It is vulnerability to be encountered, made of attention.

6. The Five Esses & One A

How elegantly it all unfolds.

-Establish status
-Stabilize structure
-Signal safety
-Secure attention
-Show attention

The last two of these are the Larson-Munroe framework I promised, which says that allistic communication is simple as attention vectors to, then from, the individual.

The lesson? Stop trying to understand them. They're not that complicated. They're this simple:

"Hey! You're a kitty!"

Z_LXXXII (C) 03Aug2025
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For more in the
"Why Do Neurotypicals?"
series, see
#75 Small Talk
#80 Bullying

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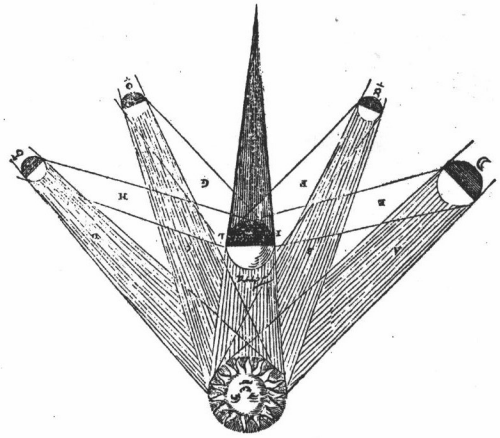
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